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Imagery analysis report

**66th Army, Beijing Military Region, China**

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IAN-0138/80  
DECEMBER 1980  
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**66th ARMY, BEIJING MILITARY REGION, CHINA**

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**ABSTRACT**

1. [ ] This report discusses the status of the 66th Army in Beijing Military Region, China, as of [ ]. It describes physical changes to the facilities and order-of-battle changes and fluctuations from [ ]. The functions and locations of these units were derived primarily from KEYHOLE imagery. [ ]

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2. [ ] Most activity during the period was confined to the 197th Infantry Division where extensive reconstruction has been taking place since the July 1976 Tangshan earthquake. Highlights included the identification of a new tank regiment for the division and the relocation of the division headquarters.

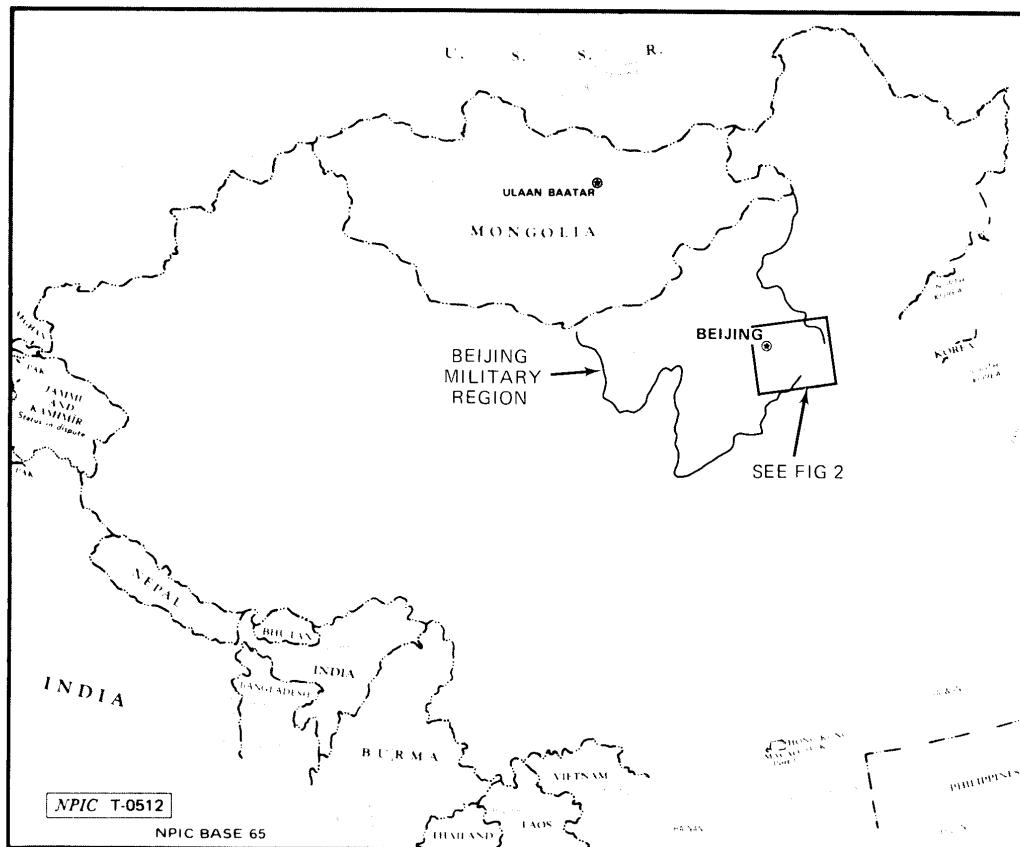
3. (U) This report contains two location maps, two photographs, one table, and four charts.

**INTRODUCTION**

4. [ ] The 66th Army is one of eight main force armies in the Beijing Military Region (MR; Figure 1) and has the same general organizational structure as other People's Liberation Army (PLA) units throughout China. The 66th Army, believed to be headquartered in the Yangliuqing area (39-08-00N 116-59-00E) of Tianjin municipality, is bounded by the 24th Army 125 nautical miles (nm) to the north and the 38th Army 75 nm to the west. All three of its divisions are within 45 nm of the Bo Hai Gulf and are deployed along a northeast/southwest axis, suggesting a mission to protect the northeastern approaches into the MR.

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5. (U) The numbered unit designators used in this report were acquired from referenced documents 1, 2, and 3.

**FIGURE 1. 66TH ARMY, BEIJING MILITARY REGION, CHINA**

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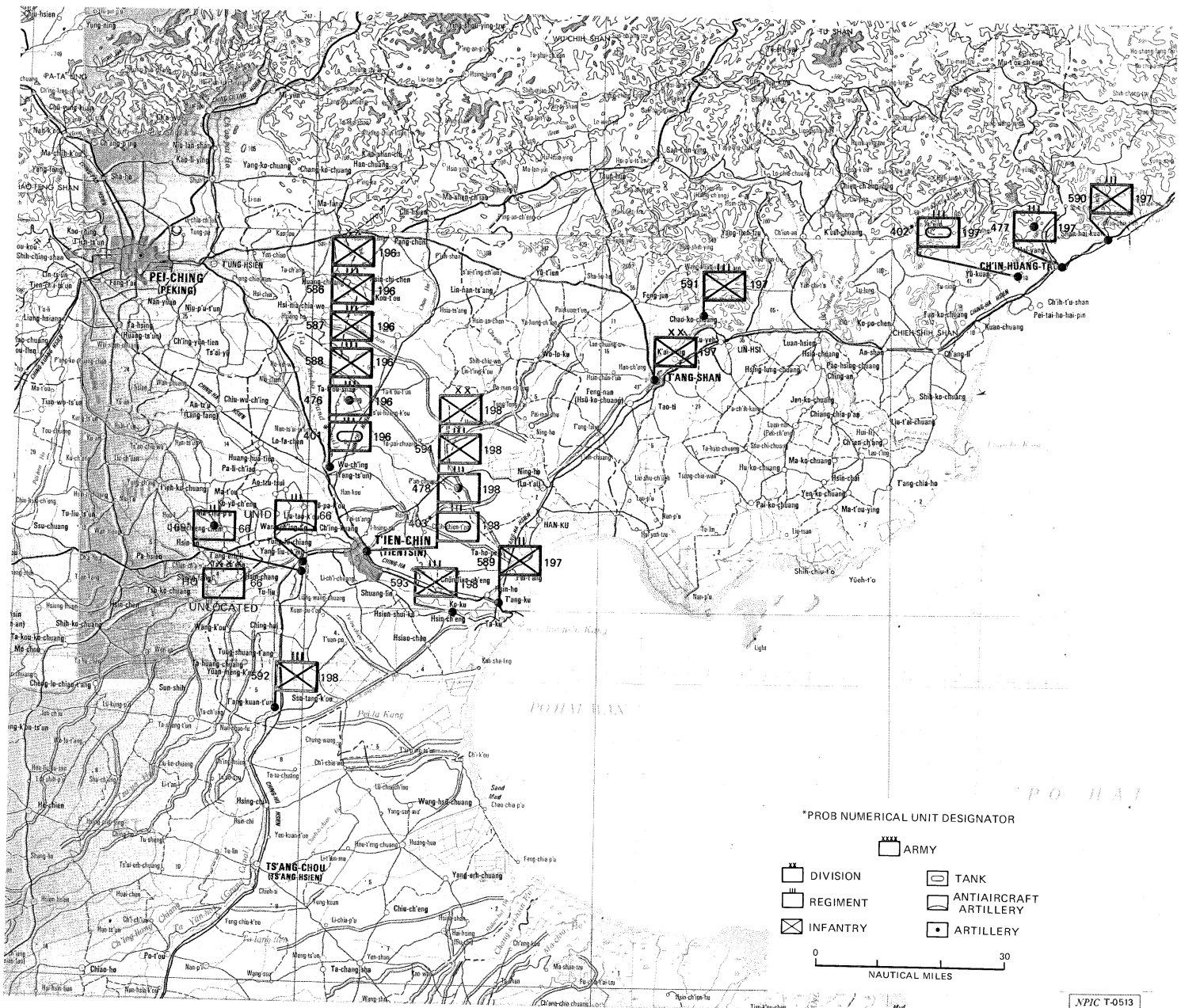


FIGURE 2. LOCATIONS OF UNITS IN THE 66TH ARMY

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BASIC DESCRIPTION

6. [redacted] The 66th Army is made up of the army headquarters, the army-level support units, and 196th, the 197th, and the 198th Infantry Divisions (Figure 2, Chart 1, and Table 1).

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Headquarters and Army-level Support Units

7. [redacted] The 66th Army Headquarters has not been identified on imagery but is believed to be in Yangliuqing. Yangliuqing Army Barracks Northeast AL-1 [redacted] which houses an independent ponton bridge regiment, is the closest major installation to the reported coordinates for the unlocated headquarters. The known headquarters elements of the 66th Army are the 169th\* Artillery Regiment and an antiaircraft artillery (AAA) regiment. A rocket launcher battalion has not been identified with the 169th\* nor are there barracks or vehicle sheds present to house such a unit. The AAA regiment appears to be standardly organized.

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196th Infantry Division

8. [redacted] The 196th Infantry Division is headquartered at Wuqing Headquarters Infantry Division and Army Barracks AL-1, 15 nautical miles north-northwest of Tianjin. This installation houses all known entities of the 196th Infantry Division. These are the 586th Infantry Regiment, the 587th Infantry Regiment, the 588th Infantry Regiment, the 476th Artillery Regiment, the 401st\* Tank Regiment, an AAA battalion, and an engineer battalion.

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9. [redacted] In early 1976, the 401st\* Tank Regiment was credited as a tank/assault gun regiment.<sup>4</sup> As a result of the Tangshan earthquake of 28 July 1976, all equipment was removed from the vehicle sheds, revealing the presence of a sufficient number of tanks (32) to equip a battalion plus two additional companies (20 tanks). No assault guns were observed. This sighting of tanks substantiates the fact that this unit has been upgraded to a tank regiment although it is not up to full strength. As of [redacted] there was an insufficient number of barracks or vehicle sheds at this facility to accommodate a full 80-tank regiment. Latest equipment sightings also indicate that this regiment is still using some of the older T-34 tanks.

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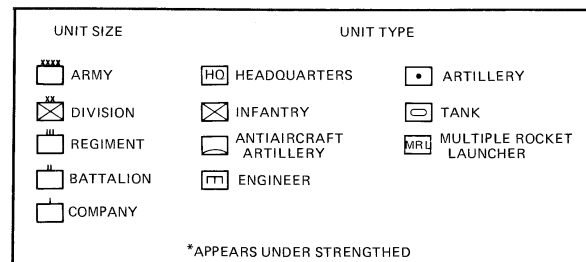
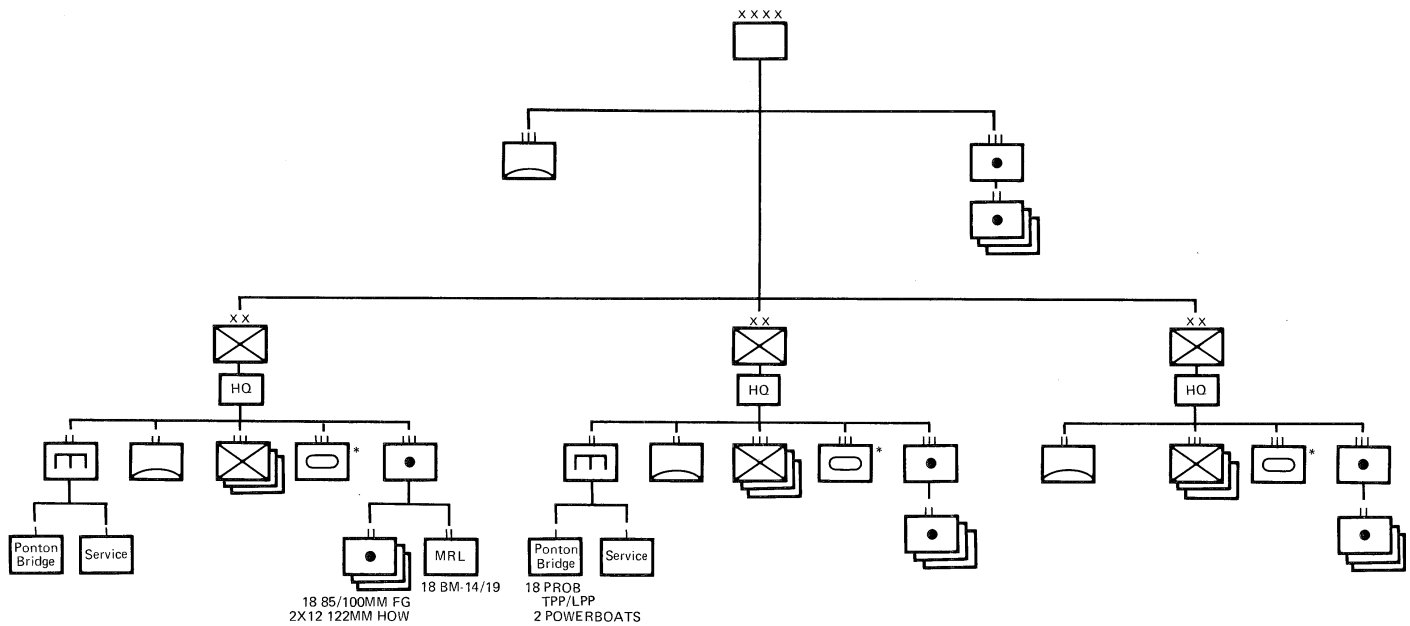
10. [redacted] The 476th Artillery Regiment is the only unit in the 66th Army known to be equipped with multiple rocket launchers (MRLs). Post Tangshan earthquake coverage revealed that this is a full-strength artillery regiment consisting of one battalion of antitank guns, two battalions of howitzers, and a battalion of truck-mounted rocket launchers. The storage and maintenance capabilities of this regiment have expanded since mid-1977 with the addition of seven vehicle storage buildings, a vehicle maintenance building, and 11 support buildings.

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CHART 1. ARMY UNITS CONFIRMED FROM IMAGERY ANALYSIS

Table 1.  
66th Army Units, Beijing Military Region, China, as Derived from All-Source Information  
This table in its entirety is classified TOP SECRET RUFF

Item	Unit	Installation Name	Coordinates	BE Number	Remarks	
1	Hq-Army				Unlocated, but believed to be at Yangliuqing, Tianjin municipality (39-08-00N/116-59-00E)	
2	Unid AAA Regt	Yangliuqing Army Bks SE AL-2	39-07-09N 117-00-27E		Standard regiment	25X1
3	169th* Arty Regt	Yangliuqing Army Bks S AL-3	39-05-42N 117-00-28E		3 gun/gun-how bns no rocket launcher bn identified	
4	Hq-196th Inf Div	Wuqing Hq Inf Div and Army Bks AL-1	39-21-45N 117-04-25E		No significant activity	
5	Engr bn	Wuqing Hq Inf Div and Army Bks AL-1	39-21-45N 117-04-25E		Pontons last seen [redacted]	25X1
6	AAA bn	Wuqing Hq Inf Div and Army Bks AL-1	39-21-45N 117-04-25E		No significant activity	
7	476th Arty Regt	Wuqing Hq Inf Div and Army Bks AL-1	39-21-45N 117-04-25E		Only MRI. battalion in army	
8	586th Inf Regt	Wuqing Hq Inf Div and Army Bks AL-1	39-21-45N 117-04-25E		No significant activity	
9	587th Inf Regt	Wuqing Hq Inf Div and Army Bks AL-1	39-21-45N 117-04-25E		No significant activity	
10	588th Inf Regt	Wuqing Hq Inf Div and Army Bks AL-1	39-21-45N 117-04-25E		No significant activity	
11	401th* Tank Regt	Wuqing Hq Inf Div and Army Bks AL-1	39-21-45N 117-04-25E		Appears to have 2 bns at most	
12	Hq - 197th Inf Div	Tangshan Army Bks AL-1	39-37-36N 118-09-18E		Relocated from Zhaogezhuang Hq Inf Div A Bks N AL-1 [redacted]	25X1
13	Eng bn	Tangshan Army Bks AL-1	39-37-36N 118-09-18E		Ponton bridge company confirmed	
14	AAA bn	Tangshan Army Bks AL-1	39-37-36N 118-09-18E		No significant activity	
15	477th Arty Regt	Qinhuangdao Army Bks AL-2	39-57-29N 119-35-22E		Artillery last seen [redacted]	25X1
16	589th Inf Regt	Tanggu Army Bks West AL-2	39-01-30N 117-35-50E		[redacted] 256 semitrailer, flatbed, and cargo trucks	25X1
17	590th Inf Regt	Shanhaiguan Army Bks AL-1	40-00-41N 119-46-01E		No significant activity	
18	591st Inf Regt	Chiu-feng-chun Army Bks AL-1	39-49-01N 118-22-58E		Approx 70% of all buildings destroyed by earthquake; reconstruction externally complete by [redacted]	25X1
19	402nd* tank Regt	Gaojiafang Army Bks N AL-1	39-53-12N 119-26-31E		Tanks identified here [redacted] 1st sighting of armor since [redacted] appears to house no more than 2 battalions	25X1 25X1 25X1
20	Hq-198th Inf Div	Tien-ching Hq Inf Div A Army Bks AL-1	39-08-54N 117-14-54E		Added since NBRG, 4 barracks (3 w/ messhall), 1 messhall, 1 bks/storage bldg, and 1 spt bldg	
21	MT bn	Wang-wen-chuang Army Bks AL-1	38-50-00N 117-18-30E		Truck park for Tien-ching AAA Complex SSE [redacted]	25X1
22	AAA bn	Tien-ching Hq Inf Div A Army Bks AL-1	39-08-54N 117-14-54E		Barracks for this unit observed ucon here [redacted] on combined-arms range	25X1
23	478th Arty Regt	Tienching Hq Inf Div A Army Bks AL-1	39-08-54N 117-14-54E		Equipment sightings low; 122mm howitzer bn seen [redacted]	25X1
24	592nd Inf Regt	Tangguantun Army Bks SW AL-1	38-40-34N 116-51-11E		No significant activity	
25	593rd Inf Regt	Gegu Army Bks WNW AL-1	38-59-54N 117-27-25E		No significant activity	
26	594th Inf Regt	Tien-ching Hq Inf Div A Army Bks AL-1	39-08-54N 117-14-54E		No significant activity	
27	403rd* Tank Regt	Tien-ching Hq Inf Div A Army Bks AL-1	39-08-54N 117-14-54E		Appears to be under strength regiment housing no more than 2 battalions	

Numerical unit designator is probable.

**197th Infantry Division**

11. [ ] The 197th Infantry Division is made up of headquarters elements, the 589th, 590th, and 591st Infantry Regiments, the 477th Artillery Regiment, the 402nd\* Tank Regiment, an AAA battalion, and an engineer battalion. The division headquarters is at Tangshan Army Barracks AL-1 (Figure 3) along with the division AAA battalion and engineer battalion. This installation was damaged extensively during the earthquake and has been undergoing a complete reconstruction. The division headquarters had previously been associated with Zhaogezhuang Headquarters Infantry Division and Barracks North AL-1 [ ] The relocation of division headquarters to the Tangshan facility leaves the subordination of this former headquarters facility in question. 25X1
12. [ ] The 591st Infantry Regiment at Chiu-feng-chun Army Barracks AL-1 was damaged extensively during the Tangshan earthquake. Approximately 70 percent of the buildings were either heavily damaged or destroyed. When last seen on imagery of September 1979, reconstruction appeared to be nearly complete. 25X1
13. [ ] The 589th Infantry Regiment, housed at Tanggu Army Barracks West AL-2, was apparently being used as a transshipment storage area for large numbers of semitrailer, flatbed and cargo trucks during a part of 1979. Over 250 were seen in April. The number had declined to between 80 and 85 when observed in May and August 1979. 25X1
14. [ ] No unusual activity or change was observed in the 590th Infantry Regiment at Shanhaiguan Army Barracks AL-1. 25X1
15. [ ] Artillery has not been seen with the 477th Artillery Regiment at Qinhuangdao Army Barracks AL-2 since March 1978. However, there is sufficient covered storage at the installation for such equipment. Additional elements of the regiment are possibly housed at Qinhuangdao Army Barracks AL-3 [ ] where a battery of field guns have been regularly seen. 25X1
16. [ ] The 402nd\* Tank Regiment is housed at Gaojiafang Army Barracks North AL-1 (Figure 4). The regiment was previously associated with Tongxian Army Barracks North AL-2 [ ] which was later reidentified as being associated with the Beijing Garrison Command. Tanks were observed at Gaojiafang on imagery of [ ] representing the first sighting of armor at this facility since 1974. Similar to the 401st\* Tank Regiment at Wuqing, this regiment was originally a tank/assault gun regiment with covered storage for 32 tanks and ten assault guns. Imagery of 1979 revealed the presence of Type-59 tanks and no assault guns. The barracks and covered vehicle storage facilities at this installation appear to be inadequate to house a full-strength tank regiment. 25X1  
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**198th Infantry Division**

17. [ ] The 198th Infantry Division is headquartered at Tien-ching Headquarters Infantry Division and Army Barracks AL-1. Also housed at this installation are the 594th Infantry Regiment, the 478th Artillery Regiment, the 403rd\* Tank Regiment, and an AAA battalion. The 592nd and 593rd Infantry Regiments are housed at Tangguantun Army Barracks Southwest AL-1 and Gegu Army Barracks West-northwest AL-1, respectively. A motor transport battalion had been identified as a part of this division at Wang-wen-chuang Army Barracks AL-1, but the facility appears to be a truck park for the AAA units at Tien-ching AAA Complex South-southeast [ ] 25X1
18. [ ] Although an engineer battalion has not been confirmed with the division, large numbers of ponton carriers were observed at the Tien-ching facility immediately following the 1976 Tangshan earthquake. Their appearance with the 403rd\* tank regiment and in the adjacent small-arms range appears to have been a temporary deployment and the equipment has not been seen since. 25X1
19. [ ] Equipment was infrequently observed at the 478th Artillery Regiment. Shed space is adequate, however, for covered storage of equipment and a howitzer battalion was seen outside these sheds in May 1979. 25X1
20. [ ] Activity levels in the 403rd\* Tank Regiment have also been low. Similar to the tank regiments with the 196th and 197th Infantry Divisions, the 403rd\* is probably made up of one to two battalions since adequate storage and barracks facilities do not exist at present to support a full regiment. 25X1
21. (S/D) No unusual activity was observed at facilities housing the infantry regiments.
22. (S/D) Construction activity within the division included the addition at Tien-ching of a small barracks to house the AAA battalion for the division. Construction was first noted in March 1978.

**Imagery Analyst's Comments**

23. [ ] The 66th Army appears to be a second-echelon main-force unit due to a relative lack of equipment particularly in its artillery and armor units. The artillery regiments appear to be understrengthed in all but one division as evidenced by the deficiency of truck-mounted rocket launchers. All tank regiments in the army are under-equipped, containing, at most, two of their authorized three battalions, possibly representing an interim status between the older tank/assault gun regiments and full 80-tank regiments. Furthermore, no upgrading of division AAA assets from battalions to regiments has been observed as has been seen in selected Chinese divisions. 25X1

\*Numerical unit designator is probable.



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24. [ ] Of particular note is the highly visible 196th Division assessed as being China's "showcase division." Foreign dignitaries are taken here on tours. US Secretary of Defense, Harold Browne, is among those who have visited here. One would expect to find in such a division the most up-to-date equipment and organization. The fact that its tank regiment is still under strength and its AAA has not been upgraded gives further support that the 66th Army is probably a second-echelon unit.

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25. [ ] By virtue of its geographic location away from the northern defensive perimeter (assuming the major perceived threat to be from the north by the Soviets) and/or a perceived need to fill out main-force units elsewhere in the military region, the 66th Army has not been allocated its full allowance of equipment and, thus, is assessed to have a secondary role within the military region.

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## REFERENCES

## IMAGERY

(TSR) All applicable KEYHOLE imagery acquired through [ ] was used in the preparation of this report.

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## MAPS

US Air Target Chart, Series 200; Sheets 0289-23 and 0381-1, -2, -3, -6, and -7; scale 1:200,000 (SECRET) [ ]

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## DOCUMENTS

1. DIA, DDB-1100-201-79SI, *Combined Ground Order-of-Battle (GOB) China*, Aug 79 (TOP SECRET [ ])

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2. DIA, DDB-1100-201-79-SI, *Combined Ground Order-of-Battle (GOB) China, Quarterly Update*, 2 May 80 (TOP SECRET [ ])

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3. CIA, [ ] *CPLA Unit Assessment*, 28 Feb 80 (TOP SECRET [ ])

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4. DIA, RDA-07/0209/70, [ ] *Basic Imagery Interpretation Report, Wu-Ching Army Barracks, AI-1*, Apr 70 (TOP SECRET R)

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5. DIA, NDA-07/5273/77 through NDA-07/5291/77, *National Basic Reference Graphic*, 12 Sep 77 (SECRET)

6. NSA, 3/00/34905-74 (CCM), *Chinese Peoples' Liberation Army: Ground Forces*, Vol 4, Part III, Chapter 9, TOP SECRET [ ]

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\*Extracted material is classified TOP SECRET [ ]

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## RELATED DOCUMENTS

DIA, DDB-1100-209-79, *Tables of Organization and Equipment, People's Republic of China*, Sep 79 (SECRET)

(S) Comments and queries regarding this report are welcome. They may be directed to [ ] Asian Forces Division, Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC, [ ]

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